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FLOOR DEBATE

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SPEAKER BRASHEAR: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the body, I will not belabor this, but I don't want Senator Beutler twisting in the wind on this issue. I heard reference made to the fact he was willing to give up the fact that members of the committee had suggested that the Chairman of the Performance Audit Committee ought to have the same relationship to our staff as any other Chair of any other committee, and I want to stand before you and tell you that I'm the one who made the motion to see that that be included. I do believe, another phrase that I picked up from Senator Beutler, by listening to the debate when off the floor this morning doing something else, was when he said why do we disrespect ourselves. And I apologize for the tone of frustration in my voice over this bill, but for those who don't know, I come from the side of not wanting anybody pawing around in any tax returns. It is not my natural bent to say, oh, let's just open the doors and destroy confidentiality and look. So I have been on, quote, maybe the other side of trying to help formulate this bill. And I did make that motion. I do believe that the Chairman of the Legislative Audit Committee ought to have the same powers as any other Chairman of any other standing committee of this body, and that we ought to respect that and demand it. Secondly, I thought Senator Jensen, not to disrespect anybody else's, Senator Wehrbein's words were wise, but Senator Jensen's words were wise also. He has all of these issues that we have all of these constituents out, citizens out across the state of Nebraska, who want to know about this, that, and the other thing, and when you can't tell them, they look at us like, what's wrong with you? Well, the reason we can't comprehensively answer some of the questions that our citizen constituents ask us is because we don't entitle ourselves to that kind of information. I've had several people say to me this morning, are you really in favor of releasing tax returns? Please, that's not what this is. They may not be able to understand it out there, but we can read and understand it here. It's about random, random selection in order to obtain data, never to obtain a copy, in order to compile studies, in order to answer questions, in order that we might know whether the things that the citizens complain to us about are functioning or failing to function. We are using the federal standards. Good heavens! I mean, you know, Congress does everything correctly. They sit there in their televised